

Lesson 25

The Seven Reasons We Get Stuck

Introduction

Tonight, I want to call a time-out. Let's take a week to have you discuss and evaluate where you are on your individual roads to recovery. I believe it is valuable for us all to take a breath, pause, and review our program. We need to stop for a moment and thank God as we look back on our progress and our growth. We need to make sure we are still moving forward through the principles, that we are not hung up on a particular one.

Some of you may have just begun the journey through the principles. Others are somewhere in the middle. It really doesn't matter which one you're on. Anyone can get off track and stuck.

Seven Reasons

Tonight we are going to talk about the seven reasons we get "stuck" in our recoveries!

You Have Not Completely Worked the Previous Principle

Perhaps you are trying to move through the principles too quickly. Slow down! Give God time to work! Just moving forward isn't always progress. Did your brakes ever go out when you were driving down a hill? You may be going fast, but it's not progress. It's panic! Remember, this program is a process. It's not a race to see who finishes first.

Galatians 5:25 says, "Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit."

Take your time with each principle. Work it to the best of your ability. Remember, many

people get lost while trying to find an easier route for the straight and narrow.

You Have Not Completely Surrendered Your Will and Your Life to the Lord

Remember, there are two parts to Principle 3. The first is to ask Jesus Christ into your heart as your Higher Power, your Lord and Savior. The second is to seek to follow His will for your life in all your decisions. Perhaps you are trusting Jesus with the “big” things, but you still think you can handle the “small” things.

Proverbs 3:5–6 (TLB) tells us, “For good judgment and common sense, ... trust in the Lord completely; don’t ever trust in yourself. In everything you do, put God first, and he will direct you and crown your efforts with success.”

What part of your life are you still holding on to? What areas of your life are you withholding from God? What don’t you trust Him with?

You Have Not Accepted Jesus’ Work on the Cross for Your Forgiveness

You may have forgiven others, but you think your sin is too big to be forgiven.

First John 1:9 (TLB) tells us, “If we confess our sins to him, he can be depended on to forgive us and cleanse us from every wrong.” Every wrong! Not just some of our wrongs, but all of them! Believe me, your sin isn’t that special, isn’t that different.

“So overflowing is his kindness towards us that he took away all our sins through the blood of his Son, by whom we are saved” (Ephesians 1:7, TLB). The verse says, “all of our sins.” Not some of these and some of those, but all of our sins. Period.

I think the real question here is “Have you forgiven yourself?” That’s where I see most people getting stuck in their recoveries.

This is what God wants you to do with the darkness of your past: “‘Come now, let us reason together,’ says the Lord. ‘Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool’” (Isaiah 1:18).

Remember, “Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” (Roman’s 8:1).

You Have Not Forgiven Others Who Have Harmed You

You must let go of the pain of past harm and abuse. Until you are able to release it and forgive it, it will continue to hold you as its prisoner.

It has been said that forgiveness is the key that unlocks the door of resentments and removes the handcuffs of hate. It is the power that breaks the chains of bitterness and the shackles of selfishness.

God’s Word promises in 1 Peter 5:10–11(TLB): “After you have suffered a little while, our God, who is full of kindness through Christ, will give you his eternal glory. He personally will pick you up, and set you firmly in place, and make you stronger than ever.”

Do you know that you may need to ask forgiveness for blaming God? Let Him off the hook for what others chose to do to you.

There is God’s will, the Devil’s will, and your free will all at work on the earth. Remember, the harm others did to you was from their free will, not God’s will.

You Are Afraid of the Risk in Making the Necessary Change

It may be fair to say that some people here tonight put off change and procrastinate as long as they can. There can be several reasons for delaying positive change.

You may be paralyzed by the fear of failure.

Remember, falling down doesn't make you a failure. It's staying down that makes you one. This is where your faith and trust in Jesus Christ comes into play.

You may fear intimacy because of the fear of rejection or being hurt again.

This is why it is so important to move slowly in a new relationship, taking time to seek God's will, develop realistic expectations, and establish proper boundaries.

You may resist change (growth) because of the fear of the unknown.

My life is a mess, my relationships are a mess, but at least I know what to expect. All together now—"a mess!" If you really try working the steps and principles on that hurt, hang-up, or habit, your life will change.

Some people change jobs, mates, and friends, but never think of changing themselves. What does God's Word tell us?

"Fear not, for I am with you. Do not be dismayed.... I will strengthen you; I will help you; I will uphold you with my victorious right hand" (Isaiah 41:10, TLB).

"We can say without any doubt or fear, 'The Lord is my Helper and I am not afraid of anything that mere man can do to me'" (Hebrews 13:6, TLB).

You Are Not Willing to "Own" Your Responsibility

None of us is responsible for all the things that have happened to us. But we are responsible for the way we react to them. Let me give you some examples.

In the case of abuse, in no way is the victim at fault or responsible for the abuse.

Step 8 in our sexual/physical abuse 12 Steps reads as follows:

Made a list of all persons who have harmed us and became willing to seek God's help in forgiving our perpetrators as well as forgiving ourselves. Realize that we have also harmed others and become willing to make amends to them.

My kids are not responsible for being children of an alcoholic, but they are responsible for their own actions and recovery. You need to take the responsibility for your part in a broken relationship, a damaged friendship, or with a distant child or parent.

“Examine me, O God, and know my mind; test me, and discover ... if there is any evil in me and guide me in thy everlasting way” (Psalm 139:23, GNB).

We increase our ability, stability, and responsibility when we increase our accountability to God.

You Have Not Developed an Effective Support Team

Do you have a sponsor or an accountability partner? Do you have the phone numbers of others in your small group? Have you volunteered for a 12-Step commitment to your support group?

There are a lot of opportunities to get involved at Celebrate Recovery:

Bar-B-Que team

Solid Rock Cafe team

Bulletin stuffers

Greeters

Sponsors

Accountability Partners

Much more...

All you have to do is ask!

“Be with wise men and become wise. Be with evil men and become evil” (Proverbs 13:20, TLB).

“Dear brothers, you have been given freedom: not freedom to do wrong, but freedom to love and serve each other” (Galatians 5:13, TLB).

“Share each other’s troubles and problems, and so obey our Lord’s command” (Galatians 6:2, TLB).

Remember, the roots of happiness grow deepest in the soil of service.

Wrap-up

Now you know the seven areas in which we can get bogged down, stuck in our recoveries. How do I know? Because somewhere along my own personal road to recovery, I visited them all.

Take time this week and reflect on your progress, your growth. If you are stuck, talk to your accountability partner, your sponsor, or your small group leader. Find out which of the seven reasons you are hung-up on, and together, implement a plan of action and move ahead on your journey.

Keep Celebrate Recovery’s Daily Action Plan for Serenity (printed here as well as on page XX in Participant’s Guide 4) where you can see it and review it daily.

Celebrate Recovery’s Daily Action Plan for Serenity

1. Daily, continue to take an inventory. When you are wrong, promptly admit it.
2. Daily, study and pray asking God to guide you and help you apply His teaching

and will in your life.

3. Daily, work and live the principles to the best of your ability, always looking for new opportunities to help and serve others—not just at your recovery meetings but in all areas of your life.

Closing Thoughts

Oh, how kind our Lord was, for he showed me how to trust him and become full of the love of Christ Jesus. How true it is, and how I long that everyone should know it, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—and I was the greatest of them all. But God had mercy on me so that Christ Jesus could use me as an example to show everyone how patient he is with even the worst sinners, so that others will realize that they, too, can have everlasting life. Glory and honor to God forever and ever. He is the King of the ages, the unseen one who never dies; he alone is God, and full of wisdom. Amen. (1 Timothy 1:14–17, TLB)

We have come to the end of this leader’s guide, but you are now ready to begin the most exciting part—the actual stepping out and starting one of the most important and significant ministries in your church.

Romans 12: 10–13 (NCV) is my for you and your new recovery program.

“Love each other like brothers and sisters. Give each other more honor than you want for yourselves. Do not be lazy but work hard, serving the Lord with all your heart. Be joyful because you have hope. Be patient when trouble comes, and pray at all times. Share with God’s people who need help. Bring strangers in need into your homes.”

Please write to me or visit our website, www.celebraterecovery.com and share your victories, struggles, and prayer requests.

Write to:

John Baker

Celebrate Recovery Books

25422 Trabuco Road #105-151

Lake Forest, CA 92630

I am looking forward to learning about all the lives that will be changed and families reunited because of your decision to start Celebrate Recovery.

In His steps,

John Baker